



Family Resource Network (FRN)

September-October 2021



Coordinator's Corner

The past year and a half has been a time of stress, anxiety, drastic changes and uncertainty for everyone and through it all parents/families have persevered, adapted and did what was necessary in order to transition to virtual schooling and work and adjust to the lack of social interactions and human contact. You have demonstrated remarkable adaptive skills and patience and we here at the Family Resource Network commend you for your great effort.

Things are slowly beginning to transition back to normal and staff here are working with workshop presenters, playgroup sites and libraries to determine when we can restart in-person offerings for you and your children. Here's hoping that the weather in the next 2 months will cooperate, unlike all the rainy or hot days in July and August that caused many outdoor endeavors to be cancelled.

Over the summer we had a major transition of our own; our office moved from downtown Lowell to new space on the Tewksbury-Lowell line right off Route 495. This makes it so much easier for us to travel to your town. We will be setting up more in-person FRN Community Hours in all of your towns. We're waiting for clearance from the sites. Many facilities are not allowing in-person sessions on site just yet. Check the next page for the hours we will be in your community.

In the meantime if you have any questions about available community resources, playgroups, child development information, support or screening tools, staff are readily

available by email (gfortes@commteam.org) or phone (978-654-7121) to assist you.

Staff will be at the **Billerica Farmers Market** on September 20th; so, please stop on by, say "hi", listen to a story and receive a free children's book. Once again, in October we will be co-hosting a **Family Halloween Event** at the Billerica Public Library and a **Family Halloween Craft Night** at the Old Yellow Meeting House in Dracut. Both were done virtually last year and were hugely successful; so, we're trying for in-person this year. To receive all our updates, just email Gail at gfortes@commteam.org to be added to our **email family notices distribution list**. In addition to our updates, you will receive our newsletters, event flyers, parenting tips, articles and more. Also, check out our webpage and parent bulletin boards regularly for craft ideas, articles and links to parenting and health resources.

Goodbye

It is with much sadness that we announce that at the end of October, Deb Berthiaume, our long-time playgroup coordinator, will be retiring after decades of teaching, facilitating playgroups and providing support to families. She will be greatly missed.

Gail Fortes

FRN Program Coordinator
gfortes@commteam.org
978-654-7121

* [Community Teamwork | Coordinated Family & Community Engagement \(commteam.org\)](#)

* [Family Resource Network Parents' Page: Activities & Home Curriculum \(padlet.com\)](#)

* [CTI-CFCE Parent Page: Articles & Resources \(padlet.com\)](#)



The Family Resource Network is funded by the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.
It is managed by Community Teamwork.





Autumn Happenings



Community Hours

A staff person will be present at the following locations to provide parents with community resources, parenting and child development information and more; so, bring your questions. More locations will be added once in-person sessions are allowed.

Starting the week of Sept. 20th

Billerica Public Library: Wednesdays from 10:30-12:00 AM

Chelmsford Public Library: Mondays from 11-12:30 PM

Stories & More

Virtual interactive fun for kids

Miss Debbie will use children's stories, songs, flannelboard, fingerplays and more to engage your child.

Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday starting September 20th-October 28th
10:00-10:30 AM

<https://zoom.us/j/98917970970>

Billerica Farmers Market

Date: Monday, September 20th

Time: 3-7:00 PM

Location: Billerica Senior Center—lawn
(Billerica Center)

Free children's book, live storytime, program and community information.

Dads & Donuts Outdoor Storytime

2nd Saturday of every month

0-10:30 AM

Chelmsford Public Library

25 Boston Rd., Chelmsford

Description: Children are invited to bring their dads (and other caregivers) and their favorite snacks to enjoy this outdoor storytime especially for kids ages 2+ and their favorite grownups!

Melodies & More with James Lepler (for ages 0-5)*

Join us for a fun-filled, outdoor singalong with James Lepler

Thursday, October 7th

10:00 AM

This program will be held outdoors on the Senior Center lawn next door to the Billerica Library.

15 Concord Rd., Billerica

Registration for this event opens Monday, Social distancing rules apply.

Required, online registration begins on Monday, 9/13 at 9:00 a.m. on the Library's website

[10/07/2021 | Melodies and More with James Lepler! | Billerica Public Library \(assabetinteractive.com\)](https://www.billericalibrary.org/10/07/2021)

"The Zoo & You" Storytime

Tuesday, September 21 at 2:00 p.m.

A virtual storytime with a live animal, a story and a question/answer time ages 3.5 - 7 years old

Kids, go on a wild reading adventure with this 20 minute, engaging storytime created especially for us by the zookeepers of the Fort Worth Zoo in Texas.

Registration required: Billerica Public Library website.

Online, required registration starts Monday, August 30.

Coming in November

- ◆ 11/04 Workshop for Parents of Young Children: **How to Succeed at Co-Parenting!**
- ◆ More stories from **Big Joe the Storyteller**
- ◆ **Collaborative playgroups** with the Anne Sullivan Center
- ◆ In-person playgroups (hopefully)

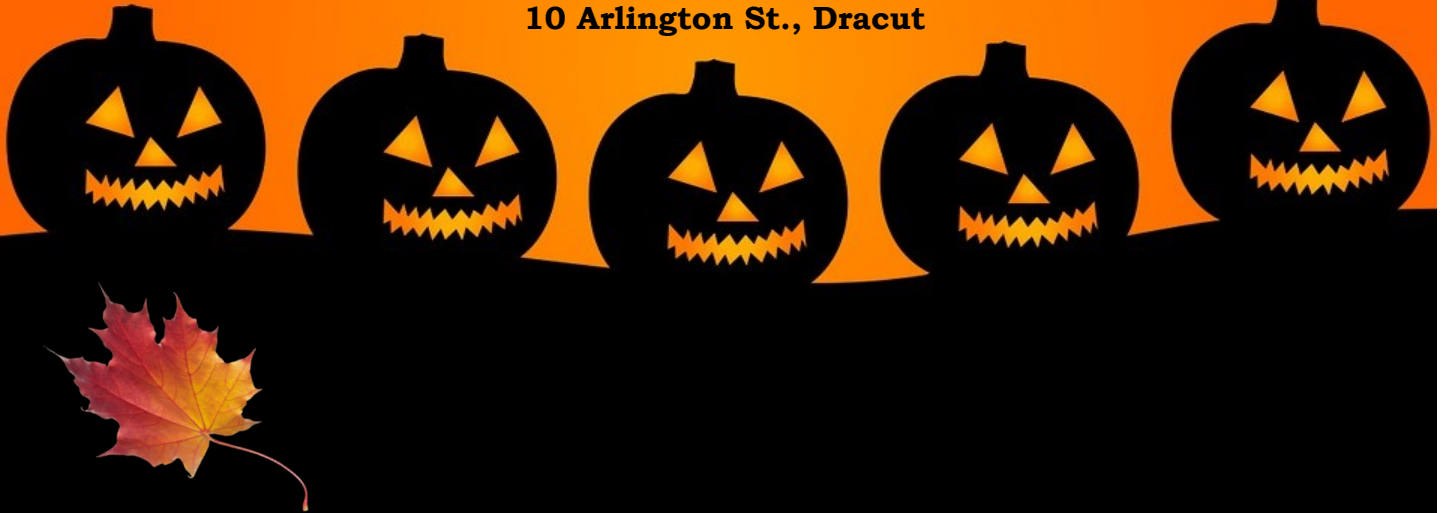
Halloween Craft Night for Kids

Children will have an opportunity to do 3 different crafts, and receive a free children's book.

Date: 10/22

Time: 7:00 PM

Old Yellow Meeting House (Christ Church United)
10 Arlington St., Dracut



This event is sponsored by the Family Resource Network and the Billerica Public Library Children's Room

Halloween Magic Show

Saturday, October 23rd **

10:00 AM

Billerica Public Library-outside on the COA Lawn next to the library.

Magician Tommy James will be performing his family-fun magic show on Saturday, October 23rd at 10:00 AM at the Billerica Library. Tommy promises magic, fun and laughter for the entire family with some Halloween themed magic mixed in. There will also be a magical appearance from Bunnacula the magic bunny! It will be a spooktacular and fun time! Magician Tommy will also provide tips on Halloween Safety.

Halloween Literacy Goody Bags will be distributed to the first 100 children

** Rain date is October 30th.

Family Resource Network

Learning Through Enrichment



AGES & STAGES QUESTIONNAIRES (ASQ)

Like most parents, do you ever wonder if your child's development is progressing normally? Let us help. The Family Resource Network can provide you access to the Ages & Stages Questionnaire or (ASQ) which is widely used by childcare programs, doctors offices, early intervention programs and other human services agencies.

What is ASQ? It is a simple, user-friendly, child development questionnaire that parents can use with their children ages 1 month to 5-1/2 years old. It helps determine if your child is progressing at a typical rate or may need some support. Sometimes this may be as simple as using play activities designed to reinforce learning and development. The Family Resource Network can provide you with online access to the questionnaire that's appropriate for our child's age, which can be completed by you in the comfort of your own home. Our staff of early childhood professionals will share your questionnaire results with you and if needed provide you with the fun activities and support you can use to help promote your child's growth. All information is confidential.

Our ASQ page: <https://www.asqonline.com/family/4066c4>

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.
Gail F. at gfortes@commteam.org or 978-654-5704. Email works best.

SAFETY & MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Mass 211 <https://mass211.org/>

Mass 211 is the centralized hub for comprehensive information and referrals to the complete spectrum of services in Massachusetts. Mass 211 can be contacted by dialing **211**.

Call2Talk Program www.uwotc.org/Call2Talk; 508-532-CALL(2255) or dial 2-1-1

At Call2Talk someone is there to listen every day to people in need of emotional support. Calls are free and confidential.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

<https://www.mass.gov/suicide-prevention-program>

A National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Crisis Center 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Suicide Prevention Crisis Hotlines

Samaritans Statewide Hotline Call or Text: 1-877-870-HOPE (4673)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press # 1 if you are a Veteran

The Trevor Helpline 866-4-U-TREVOR (488-7386) Specifically for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender youth and young adults.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Mass Coalition Against Sexual Assault And Domestic https://janedoe.org/find_help/

Call SafeLink 1-877-785-2020

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/rape-crisis-centers>

SafeLink is the statewide domestic violence hotline to talk to someone and be connected with a local sexual assault or domestic violence program. SafeLink is free and confidential.

Greater Lowell Area

Center for Hope and Healing Hotline: (800) 542-5212 Office: (978) 452-7721

HandholdMA.org is a new, family friendly website designed to help families navigate the mental health system in Massachusetts.

Handhold's three main sections help parents answer these three big questions: *should I worry?*, *what can I do?*, and *who can help?* Whatever steps a family decides to take, HandholdMA.org offers a variety of tips, tools, and resources to help families take them with confidence.

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